

Historic Appomattox
Virginia

A Live Weekly Newspaper Serving the Heart of Virginia's Great Dark Tobacco Belt, at Historic Appomattox Where War Ended April 9, 1865

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APPOMATTOX, VIRGINIA

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Established 1852

1940 Marks The 25th Anniversary of Work of Extension Service

By R. B. Hughes
County Agent, Appomattox County

Introduction

Appomattox county was formed in 1845 from portions of Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte and Prince Edward. The name is of Indian origin. The Indians of the section were Algonquians in whose language "Appomattox" means a "serpent like water." One authority on nomenclature says, "Tobacco plant country" and still another tradition is that this county is a part of a tract owned by Princess Appomattox, a member of Powhatan's family. The State's geographical center of the State is located in the Appomattox section of the county. The area is 342 square miles, population more than 9,000 and the elevation around 600 to 640 feet in some sections. There are several varieties (types) of productive soils suitable for general farming a part of which is especially adapted to the growing of dark-leafed tobacco, however, in recent years tobacco acreage has given way to more hay and livestock.

The Vignette of 25 Years

Appomattox county has been a laboratory in which have been tested the principles of Extension Teaching. Those who have had a part in this demonstration work for the past 25 years feel that the tests have reacted favorably and that the people of Appomattox have been definitely benefited.

A vignette of the activities undertaken during that period is interesting to those who were a part of them.

Major J. W. Flood, who was well known, admired and respected by the older people in the county, was the first county agent, under Mr. T. O. Sandy, during the years of 1911-1913. Major Flood labored under many difficulties, covering the entire county riding over muddy roads in a buggy or on horseback preaching to the farmers, especially his demonstrators, that a program of line legumes would increase yields, corn in particular. The older farmers would hang on to his words and be inspired by his personality and the doctrine that this program would give them more hay and grain.

Mr. B. G. Anderson, then and now superintendent of the Appomattox Experiment Station, followed Major Flood as county agent, and was the first agent appointed under the Smith-Lever Act. After graduating from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1906, he was assistant director of the experiment station, under Mr. E. H. Mathison, prior to his appointment as agent in 1914-1919. He is affectionately known to every man, woman and child in the county. He recalls that extension work was in its infancy and he used his untiring efforts in his quiet but most efficient way in broadening the program to encourage and inspire the farmers in a better and more economic production of high quality tobacco and other crops. Under his leadership he developed an interest among the people in the importance of using purchased dairy and beef sires and dams. The influence of his splendid work is very noticeable in the people of the county today. The vignettes would show many demonstrations in the three and four year rotation of crops with the use of lime, clover and grasses and more judicious use of fertilizer, which is the basic work of the Experiment Station. Mr. Anderson's Christian life will long live in the county as one who inspired his people to higher things in life, materially and spiritually.

There also would be found W. H. Byrne, whom the entire county loves today and who is affectionately called "Billy." After graduating from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1915, he taught two years in the public schools and then succeeded B. G. Anderson as county agent from 1918-1925, taking the handles of a plow showing what he meant by ridge system and cultivating tobacco and corn. He would be seen also working daily and far into the night mixing by hand the fertilizers he recommended for use under his demonstration acres that the best yields and quality might be obtained.

There would be during that time a chore of many men and women devoted to duty, helping farmers to grow the food and feed that would "win the war" in that 1917-1918 period. During this time Mr. Byrne organized the first county agricultural Advisory Board, consisting of

19 leading farmers and business men of the county might be improved. They recommended and adopted a five year program which was carried out in the county. In this way the Extension program was greatly expanded by appointing leading farmers and business men as committees on "cottony animal" husbandry, poultry, agricultural education, agricultural engineering, horticulture, marketing and home development. Coming to the Extension Service from public school teaching, it was most logical that he regarded 4-H club work as an educational movement. He has been responsible primarily for the organization and development of interest in 4-H club projects. Thus, he devoted several years to helping the farm boys and girls of the county provide and enjoy a more abundant life.

Privately and publicly Mr. Byrne argued with the fervor of an evangelist the value of carrying out this Extension program. With the backing of these committees and through the cooperation of the people, Extension work stands out as a monument to him. He was considered one of the best agents in the state, and deserved his promotion as State Extension Agent.

The writer succeeded W. H. Byrne in the early spring of 1926, at the time the old Tri-State Tobacco Growers Association was breathing its last. The fatal blow was the "knock-out" caused by its enemies expended within and without. Naturally low prices for tobacco followed. Since then many changes have taken place. Low world prices, droughts, storms, occasionally better crops with improved quality with prices even then below cost of production, however, farmers are notoriously good at absorbing shocks and are probably the quickest element in the world to recover from disaster.

The strengthening of their morale is worth far more than the money they receive. We had to turn to the fundamentals of successful farming, encouraging a balanced program, abundance of food and feed for the family, high quality tobacco and more livestock.

The tobacco acreage declined, with a rapid increase in the number of livestock, poultry, dairy cows, beef and swine. While my predecessors planted the seed of better rotation, fertilizers, lime and clover, circumstances forced us to think more in these terms. The reorganization of the Agricultural Advisory Board, the agent and leading farmers put forth renewed and determined efforts in having more of our farmers establish a sprayer, rotate crops, using the use of more lime, clover, mixed grasses and high analysis fertilizers, and more and better pastures.

Fortunately lispedsa was introduced and those who were unable to use lime and whose land was not strong enough for the production of clover were encouraged to sow lispedsa. At this time lispedsa and clover seeds were high and here is one strong seed in the present agent's work. After contacting many of our farmers in different communities we discussed the importance of having clover and lispedsa seed not only for home use but for sale. The county is now nearly self-sufficient in legume seeds and nearly every threshing machine man now owns a clover harrow. The late depression, and droughts in 1929 and 1936, were another serious blow to the farmers; however, we rallied to the front carrying the "live at home" campaign, which prevented much suffering. Then we plunged into the A. A. A. program carrying it to all of the farmers, because of the trust that the farmers had in their leaders, the growers steadily reduced their tobacco and other cash crops to cooperate with the program in its attempt to control prices. Just twenty-five years ago on May 1, President Wilson signed the Smith-Lever Act. Now, after a full quarter of a century of experience, we still find ourselves on the threshold of new opportunities, in a period of facts and problems, and efficient methods of production, and to farmers which would make a better place to live. Looking backward, the Extension group has always given their best to the people of the county, and looks forward with a high hope for future success for the farmers of Appomattox County.

stability in agriculture. The problem which Extension Service has taken in promoting the national program for agriculture in recent years is too fresh in our minds to need review here. With all our emphasis on the national program, however, we have given aid to rural people on all economic facts and problems, and efficient methods of production, and to farmers which would make a better place to live. Looking backward, the Extension group has always given their best to the people of the county, and looks forward with a high hope for future success for the farmers of Appomattox County.

Buckingham To Discontinue Co. Home Agent

By a tie vote, with the tiebreaker called in to cast the deciding vote, the Buckingham county board of supervisors decided Monday to discontinue home demonstration activities in the county February 1.

Meeting was made by C. W. Anderson, and seconded by N. F. Payne to discontinue the appropriation of \$700 per year for home demonstration work. On taking the vote, a tie resulted, with three for and three against. A. S. Spencer joined Payne and Anderson in voting against, and a special conference Monday, January 8, at the Executive Mansion. The average taxpayer wants to know if his taxes are going to be increased by the Assembly, therefore the Governor's recommendations will be examined closely.

A. C. Wood was re-elected chairman of the board.

Miss Mettie Downing was home demonstration agent for Buckingham county.

Johnson Now Supt. Lynchburg Plant

H. G. Johnson, who has been sales agent for the Standard Oil Co. here for the past eighteen years, has received a promotion, and has been named superintendent of the Lynchburg plant of the company, with his headquarters in Lynchburg. While Mr. Johnson was stationed here, Virginia's public schools, which have had a total increase of \$146 in the State appropriation per teacher unit during the last five years, will ask the assembly to more than double that, as well as provide other large outlays for the educational program. In 1939 the State appropriation per teacher unit was approximately \$484. Today it is \$600 and the State board of education, supported by the Virginia Education Association, an organization of teachers and others, includes the \$720 per teacher minimum, estimated to require an additional \$610 each year; an actuarially sound retirement law, estimated to require \$978,395 additional; and free textbooks, estimated to require another \$978,648.

Various suggestions for reorganizing branches of the State Government for greater efficiency have been advanced by the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce committee on taxation, and government. Governor Price has stated that the committee's report will be given careful consideration. He said, "We have quite a number of these proposals under consideration. The research work of our division of the budget has been along somewhat parallel lines. Bills designed to make effective some of the recommendations already have been prepared by the advisory legislative committee. Among the committee's suggestions: Consolidation of the State department of labor, the industrial commission and the unemployment compensation into a department of industrial relations, headed by a three man commission. Expansion of the State highway department to include a division of public works, making the proposed new set-up the technical construction unit to assist State departments, institutions and local governments in their building programs. Establishment of a department of conservation to be created with the State conservation commission, the commission of fisheries, the commission of game and inland fisheries and the State port authority as divisions of the new unit. Establishment of an integrated State department of finance, which would bring the present division of finance and control, the treasury, and the division of purchase and printing under one directing head to be known as the commissioner of finance, with the objective of establishing sound fiscal management of every branch of the State government."

Frank Murphy slated to get appointment to Supreme Court.

Germany watches to see if Allen still Finland.

Proof lacking that torpedo sank the Athenia.

Appomattox is a growing town! Coldest winter spell in several years experienced here.

Play safe, drive carefully.

Danville man killed in car wreck.

Supervisors meet Wednesday.

Roosevelt proposes new taxes to finance defense program.

Await Governor Price's Budget Estimates

Richmond, Jan. 3. (By VPA)—Next week the Old Dominion's law-making machinery will launch its biennial operations when the Virginia General Assembly convenes for its 134th session. Important legislation awaits consideration by the Senate and the deliberations are expected to hold major attention of Virginians. Of major interest will be the budget recommendations of Governor Price, who has announced that the public schools will receive primary consideration. The press of the State will get its usual preview of the budget recommendations at a special conference Monday, January 8, at the Executive Mansion. The average taxpayer wants to know if his taxes are going to be increased by the Assembly, therefore the Governor's recommendations will be examined closely.

Awaiting decision of the legislators are matters dealing with increased appropriations for public schools and revamping of the State's paroled and parole system and a proposed to abandon the fee system for compensating sheriffs and city sergeants, the State's contributions to aid the aged and blind, moves to through safety measures and other proposals, labor disputes, a new system for State employees and a myriad of other issues. All in all, the coming session looks as a busy one for the State's lawmakers.

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Appomattox Had Its Biggest Growth In The Year Just Ended

Cupid Rallied In December

Dec. Cupid came roaring back in Appomattox County during the month of December, to keep the number of marriages here on a par with the year 1939 from taking a nose-dive. Twenty-four marriages licenses were issued at the county clerk's office during the last month of the year, but even at that, the 1939 total number of marriages licenses issued was only 41, or twelve less than the 1938 total of 53.

We're Board Announcement

The Board of Public Welfare of Appomattox County requests that persons desiring to make application for assistance through the Department of Public Welfare call at the Welfare Office only on Tuesdays and Fridays. Mrs. Virginia S. Marks, Superintendent of Public Welfare, will be in the office Tuesdays and Fridays from 9 to 12:30 A. M. and 1:30 to 5:00 P. M.

NO CHANGE IN SALARIES

The State Compensation Board, in fixing salaries and expense allowances for county officers for the coming year as to salaries of county officers in Appomattox county, an increase of \$61 in the county treasurer's expense list was allowed.

WOOTEN—BASS

Miss Frances Geraldine Bass, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Bass, and Bernard George Wooten, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Wooten, were married December 29, at the Presbyterian church here, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. R. E. Wooten.

Pamplin News

Pamplin, Jan. 3. Miss Kate M. Franklin spent the Christmas holidays with her brother, Mr. J. H. Franklin, of Chester, Pa.

Recent visitors in the home of Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Pears were Mr. and Mrs. Oswald Pears and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pears of Lynchburg. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Copeland, of Clifton Forge, and Miss Mildred Pears, of Washington.

Miss Roma Saul, of Pennsylvania, was a weekend visitor in the home of Miss Eurlan Rosser.

Horton Miller and Billy Southall spent the Christmas holidays with their grandmother, at Chatham.

She North, of Lynchburg, was a recent visitor of her aunt, Mrs. T. R. Ransom.

Recent visitors in the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Brightwell were Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Baldwin, of Lynchburg; Mr. and Mrs. E. G. State and family, of Farmville, and Harry Baldwin, of Farmville.

Rev. and Mrs. W. M. Black and Miss Mary Eves Black were dinner guests in the home of Mrs. N. L. McClellan Saturday.

Miss Bessie Pitzer, of Bedford, was a recent visitor in the home of Mrs. W. M. Black.

Miss Jane Estes Martin spent the Christmas holidays with her mother, and relatives in Pamplin.

Mrs. Evelyn Marsh, of Rustburg, spent last week-end with her parents, Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Marsh.

Thirty people attended the Watch-Night service at the Pamplin Methodist church December 31 from 11:30 to 12 P. M.

Miss Allen McClellan was a recent visitor in the home of Mrs. M. E. Calkins and Mrs. W. H. Moore, of Gladstone.

Days will begin getting longer now.

State beer tax collections increased during December.

Al Capone still in a Baltimore hospital.

France and England may seek a federation, says European states.

Baltimore Sun calls on Roosevelt to renounce third term.

Schools reopened Monday.

Appomattox had the biggest year in its history in 1939. In building, civic improvement, rural development, and general progress, both the town, and county "hit the jackpot." Features of the year were the building boom made possible by large PWA appropriations, including the new \$150,000 high school, the town's \$70,000 sewer system, the \$22,000 county office building, and the new \$22,000 county library building given to the county by an anonymous benefactor; some 50 miles of additional REA electric lines; a greatly expanded agricultural program; use of services of the local state fine gridding plan; progress toward securing the Surrender Grounds park; Federal development of a Holiday Lake and the huge recreational area; additional work on Highway No. 405; and organization of civic clubs and community life.

The Times-Virginian presents below its annual summary of "What Happened in Appomattox" for the week ending on Jan. 3, 1940.

Jan. 1, 1939, Local bank deposits showed appreciable growth in previous 12 months.

Jan. 2, Robert Ramsey, of Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce speaker at Burian Club.

Jan. 3, Annual report showed 93 marriages licenses issued in 1939.

Jan. 3, Appomattox Currier factory repairs under management of J. C. Edkins.

Jan. 3, Mrs. G. F. Abbott Jr., president, Garden Club.

Jan. 12, Funeral of Mrs. Ella Wooten.

Jan. 15, John Davis Charters, 79, died.

Jan. 15, Annual report of school board shows \$27,477.21 handled in 1939.

Jan. 19, Milton Toller killed at railroad crossing near Pamplin.

Jan. 20, Work completed on new \$22,000 county office building.

Feb. 1, Safety awards presented on highway.

Feb. 1, 65 on WPA list in county.

Feb. 9, Senator C. T. Moss announced candidacy for re-election.

Feb. 11, County education association holds annual meeting here.

Feb. 16, Six arrested here for charges of stealing chicken.

Feb. 21, Funeral of Mrs. Z. R. Atwood.

Feb. 17, Funeral of G. Harvey.

Feb. 23, Annual meeting of the Student Cooperative Association held at Pamplin high school.

Feb. 23, Funeral of Mrs. Alice Barker.

March 1, Announce allocation of 20 more miles of REA line.

March 5, Groves Bros. and L. N. Hernal open cleaning and pressing business.

March 12, Supervisors publish annual budget proposals.

March 14, Home of John Walton destroyed by fire.

March 15, New auto signs on sale.

April 1, Bank deposits show gain of \$51,920 over same date of 1938.

April 9, Open house at ECC camp observes anniversary.

April 13-14, 1939 meeting of Appomattox Baptist Association.

April 20, 1939, 100,000 in soil conservation checks go to farmers.

April 23, Mrs. H. C. Babcock observes 75th birthday.

May 2, Local hardware company puts on free cooking school.

May 2, Joel W. Flood named assistant federal district attorney.

May 2, Congress passes bill to enable park department to needed land for Surrender Grounds park out of \$100,000 appropriation.

May 4, Price of lime at the state plant reduced.

May 11, Bowling alley opens.

May 17, Dr. P. A. Christian taken to hospital.

May 18, Automobile highway engineer R. L. Shipe to be reappointed.

May 28, W. M. Abbott speaker at U. S. C. memorial exercises.

May 29, Appomattox high school won 9 of 14 ball-games in season.

June 1, Deadline for filing notice of candidacy for primary races with incumbent officials appointed.

June 6, L. L. Smith has 75th birthday.

June 13, Town election held.

June 18, Liberty Chapel Baptist church dedicates new Sunday School rooms.

June 15, Announce plan to make possible \$22,000 county library.

(Continued on Page Three)

Finland Relief is organized in Virginia.

State compensation board sets